

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 257597

14

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 257597

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, MASS, GR, US

REF: STATE 257293

1. POLITICAL SITUATION

-- THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS IN GREECE HAVE BROUGHT CONTINUED PROGRESS TOWARDS STRENGTHENING THE OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND INSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS. GREECE NOW BOASTS A DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT, A FREE PRESS, AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND FUNCTIONING OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES.

2. LEGAL SITUATION

-- THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT THIS PAST YEAR HAS BEEN THE PROMULGATION ON JUNE 11, 1975 OF A NEW CONSTITUTION OFFERING BROAD PROTECTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WITH SPECIFIC GUARANTEES. PART TWO OF THE CONSTITUTION, ENTITLED "INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL RIGHTS", CONTAINS ARTICLES WHICH ASSURE PERSONS LIVING WITHIN GREEK TERRITORY OF

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 257597

FULL PROTECTION OF LIFE, HONOR, AND FREEDOM IRRESPECTIVE OF

NATIONALITY, RACE OR LANGUAGE, RELIGION OR POLITICAL BELIEFS. THE CONSTITUTION ALSO PROVIDES THAT NO PERSON SHALL BE DETAINED WITHOUT A JUDICIAL WARRANT AND MUST BE BROUGHT BEFORE A COMPETENT MAGISTRATE WITHIN 24 HOURS OF ARREST. THERE ARE ALSO PROHIBITIONS AGAINST "TORTURE, BODILY MALTREATMENT, IMPAIRMENT OF HEALTH OR USE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE."

3. OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS

-- SINCE THE RETURN OF DEMOCRACY TO GREECE IN JULY 1974, THE GREEK GOVERNMENT HAS PLACED EMPHASIS ON THE OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS. MANY OF THE ELEMENTS CONTAINED IN THE DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE NEW GREEK CONSTITUTION AND HAVE BEEN OBSERVED IN ACTUAL PRACTICE. TRIALS OF THOSE ACCUSED OF PERPETRATING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES (PRINCIPALLY TORTURE) DURING THE JUNTA ERA, HAVE BEEN FAIR AND OPEN.

-- GREECE HAS ACTED WITH DISPATCH IN BRINGING ABOUT SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE CONDUCT OF ITS SECURITY OFFICIALS DURING THE LAST YEAR. WHILE THERE HAVE BEEN OCCASIONAL ALLEGATIONS OF MISTREATMENT OF PRISONERS BY INDIVIDUAL OFFICIALS (PRIMARILY IN CRIMINAL MATTERS), GOVERNMENT POLICY IS TO ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH DUE PROCESS, AND SUCH A POLICY HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED THROUGHOUT GREECE.

4. OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTING

-- THERE ARE NO RECENT HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS OF GREECE BY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. OF INTEREST, IS THE ESTABLISHMENT IN ATHENS ON MARCH 2, 1976 OF A BRANCH OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. ITS PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT ARE WELL KNOWN ANTI-JUNTA RESISTANCE FIGURES.

-- AMNESTY'S 1974-75 "ANNUAL REPORT" EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE IMPRISONMENT OF 96 JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES FOR CON-

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 257597

SCIENTIOUS OBJECTION TO MILITARY SERVICE.

-- FREEDOM HOUSE LISTS GREECE AS "FREE". KISSINGER

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